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IN SNUB TO TRUMP, ELON MUSK FORMS NEW POLITICAL PARTY

Tech billionaire Musk has formed a new political party "to give Americans their freedom back", after a fallout with Trump

REGISTERING 'AMERICA PARTY' THE NEXT STEP

"Today, the America Party is formed to give you back your freedom," Musk said in a post on X. "When it comes to bankrupting our country with waste & graft, we live in a one-party system, not a democracy," the Tesla and SpaceX CEO said. To legally form the party would require Musk to register it with the US Federal Election Commission

MUSK'S PARTY LIKELY TO BE FISCALLY PRUDENT

- Musk first raised the prospect of forming a party during his public feud with Trump, which saw him leave his role in the administration's DOGE and engage in a vicious public spat with his former ally
- The world's richest man has indicated he wants a party that is fiscally conservative and reins in spending, without more details

2024

MUSK WAS THE LARGEST DONOR TO TRUMP'S 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

After Bihar, poll panel now plans revision of rolls in Bengal, Delhi

EC says Bihar draft list would contain names of voters whose enumeration forms were received

MUKESH RANJAN & ASHISH SRIVASTAVA & RAMASHANKAR @ New Delhi/Patna

NOTWITHSTANDING the raging controversy around the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar electoral rolls, the Election Commission of India (ECI) is now preparing to launch and initiate a similar exercise in West Bengal and New Delhi sometime in August this year, sources in the poll panel told this newspaper on Sunday.

The last time the ECI verified electoral rolls in West Bengal and New Delhi was in 2002 and 2008, respectively. "As the assembly elections will be due in West Bengal after Bihar, we are preparing for the exercise in advance," a source said.

For New Delhi, the Chief Electoral Officer has notified the cut-off date for the revision as March 16, 2008. This means that all voter names added to the rolls after this date will now be subject to verification. Individuals falling in this category will be required to furnish documentary proof of citizenship to retain their names on the electoral list.

The ECI said the revision exercise in Bihar has been going on smoothly and the initial phase of it has been completed. In an official statement, the ECI said, "It is reiterated that SIR is being conducted in Bihar as per instructions issued on June 24 and there is no change in the instructions. The draft electoral rolls that will be issued on August 1, 2025 will contain the names of persons whose enumeration forms are received."

It said electors can submit any one of the 11 specified documents anytime before July 25, 2024. "After publication of Draft Electoral Rolls, if any document is deficient, EROs can obtain such documents, from the electors whose name appears in the draft Electoral Roll, during scrutiny in the claims and objection period," it noted.

"The new directive has provided a great relief to people, as they have been given a relaxation of nearly 45 days to submit required documents," said a senior official posted at the Bihar CEO office in Patna.

Highlighting the need for the SIR in the country, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar told this newspaper that during the past four months, "all 4,123 EROs, all 775 DEOs and all 6 CEOs have held nearly 5,000 meetings with 28,000 political party representatives". "ECI has invited all recognised political parties for interaction. No one was satisfied with the current status of electoral rolls for one reason or the other."

The deadline for submission of forms is July 26.

MAHUA, RJD MOVE SUPREME COURT

Trinamool Congress leader and Member of Parliament Mahua Moitra has moved the Supreme Court challenging an order of the Election Commission of India for special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar. "ECI has introduced it to deprive bonafide young electorate of Bihar. Later, they will target Bengal," Moitra told a news agency. In her plea, Moitra sought a direction to restrain ECI from issuing similar orders in other states of the country. The RJD and an NGO have also moved the top court

BRICS slams Pahalgam attack, demands urgent UNSC reforms

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

BRICS leaders on Sunday condemned the Pahalgam terror attack "in the strongest terms" and flagged the dangers of cross-border terrorism.

"We condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April 2025, during which 26 people were killed," the BRICS leaders declaration said.

In his hard-hitting address at the BRICS Summit at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called out countries that support terrorism, saying they "must pay the price." He urged BRICS to take a clear stand to deal with terrorism, saying there is no room for double standards.

"We reaffirm our commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, terrorism financing, and safe havens. We urge to ensure zero tolerance for terrorism and reject double standards in countering terrorism," the BRICS leaders' declaration said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva upon his arrival in Brazil | PTI

The declaration called for the swift adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism under the United Nations framework and demanded concerted global action against all UN-designated terrorists and entities.

In a notable shift, the Rio Declaration carried BRICS's strongest-ever language on the need for United Nations Security Council reform. "We reiterate our support for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations Security Council, with a view to making it more democratic, representative, effective and efficient," it said.

Making a sharp geopolitical statement, the BRICS leaders also condemned the recent Israeli airstrikes on Iran, terming them "a violation of international law".

In his address, Modi also made a clarion call for a multipolar, inclusive world order led by meaningful institutional reform.

"The Global South has often faced double standards. Whether it's about development, distribution of resources, or security-related matters, the interests of the Global South have not been given due importance," Modi said.

TEXAS

OFFICIALS' RESPONSE UNDER SCRUTINY

As authorities launch one of the largest search-and-rescue efforts in recent Texas history, they have come under scrutiny over preparations and why residents and youth summer camps along the river were not alerted or told to evacuate | P9

Indian players celebrate the wicket of Jamie Smith along with Akash Deep in Edgbaston on Sunday | AFP

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM AT EDGBASTON

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

FIVE days ago when India captain Shubman Gill was probed by Michael Atherton during the toss on the Playing XI (then) that looked defensive on paper, an Indian win seemed to be still in the realm of a beautiful dream.

In the real world, however, even before a ball was bowled in the second Test, the balance was tilted in favour of hosts England. They successfully chased a record total in the first. India had decided to rest ever-dependable Jasprit Bumrah despite a nine-day gap between the two games. The captain Gill is just one Test old.

On top of that India decided to go ahead with all-rounders rather than bolster their bowling. Things looked even more grim when India were 211/5 and were staring at another likely collapse after tea on Day One.

Well, that was the last moment India seemed lost. But the one-Test old captain batted, batted and batted, and in the company of Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar, broke one record after another on his way to a marathon 269. India stopped at 587. The total seemed to have done the trick. If the first innings seemed an aberration, the second seemed like highlights with fours and sixes peppered around the ground. Morally, England were crushed on the fourth day.

Inspired by the captain's innings, Akash Deep and Mohammed Siraj did what India bowlers struggled in the first Test – take 20 wickets in the two innings.

'No Bumrah, no problem'. The duo shared all ten wickets between them as India gained a 180-run lead and Gill decided to make sure the target was beyond the hosts with another strokeful hundred (161). It was only a matter of time before India levelled the series with ease, thanks to Akash Deep's 6/99 in the second innings. For the record, this is the biggest margin (336 runs) of win for India away from home and this is their first win at Edgbaston. In sports, dreams do turn into reality. Over to Lord's with hope and hoopla. P11

CM's advisor: Don't take guarantee benefits, get roads from same funds

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @Koppal

BASAVARAJ Rayareddy, chief minister's economic advisor, on Sunday created a controversy, saying roads can be built and development work taken up in rural areas only if villagers refuse to take benefits of the guarantee schemes.

Though he initially tried to justify saying it was said in jest, he touched upon it again in his speech, pointing out that the government spends crores on the guarantees schemes. That is the reason the government is spending money for development projects in a phased manner, he added.

Rayareddy was taking part in a school function at Rayavaniki, when he made the comment after villagers demanded better roads.

He said, "We will give funds for roads, temples or any other projects if people say they will not take benefits of guarantee schemes. I will suggest to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that our people now do not want guarantees or anything but road work. But 1.24 crore women heads of families are benefitting from the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, where they are getting Rs 2,000 per month. We will allot funds in coming days for other projects and will develop roads too."

He said, "There are many rural roads that need development. Don't hurry us as we still have three more years in the government and we will complete all the projects one by one."

CM's economic advisor and Yelburga MLA Basavaraj Rayareddy speaks at a function at Rayavaniki village in Koppal district on Sunday | EXPRESS

I will suggest to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that our people now do not want guarantees or anything but road work

Basavaraj Rayareddy, chief minister's economic advisor

Farmers of Rayavaniki village said, "We have elected our representatives to help us with development work. We asked about rural roads as it becomes difficult to travel on these stretches during the rainy season. One of us asked the MLA to get us better roads as they have given schemes to women. The MLA's witty repartee surprised us all. Women also travel on the same roads. We request our leaders do the needful."

ANXIOUS WAIT

RDPR contract staff not paid for 6 months

FIROZ ROZINDAR @ Vijayapura

FOR the last six months, Ram Nadagouda has been anxiously waiting for his salary, but except for some assurances, he has not received any payment.

He is now facing acute financial problems and has not been able to pay the rent. Working as information coordinator at the Indi Taluk Panchayat, he is one of over 3,000 outsourced employees at the Panchayat Raj Department who have not been paid for the last six months.

"Our last salary was in January this year. All the employees are in distress and worried," said Sahil Dhanshetty, state vice-president of the Karnataka State MGNREGA Employees' Association.

He said 3,145 are outsourced employees in the state. They are not getting their salaries as the government is creating a web portal to disburse funds for salaries. "When we contacted the officials, they said the process is on to update software," he said.

The association is going on a non-cooperation movement from Sunday. Association district president Prithviraj Patil said, "We understand this movement may cause inconvenience to officials, NREGA workers, elected members and villagers, but under current circumstances, we request everyone to support our cause."

ZP CEO Rishi Anand said, "We have been raising the matter with the government. They have assured us that the issue will be addressed soon."

Not chief, but member, of AICC OBC body: Siddu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah's office on Sunday clarified that he is not the chief of the AICC OBC wing advisory council, but is one of the members and is responsible for hosting its first meeting in Bengaluru on July 15.

After it was reported that Siddaramaiah would be chief of the committee, Assembly opposition leader R Ashoka, his counterpart in Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy and BJP state president BY Vijayendra had taken a jibe at the CM, saying it is a ploy to make him resign in November, when he completes two-and-a-half years in office. Some 15 years ago, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge met a similar fate when he ran for the CM post, said Narayanaswamy.

The CM told reporters, "I don't know about the appointment. I will talk to AICC. I was told to hold a meeting (of the advisory council) in Karnataka on July 15. I don't know whether I have been made convener or chairman. It's not about taking my service to national politics." But, he said, he will not step back if such a position is offered to him. He indirectly admitted to writing to one of the Advisory Council members and MLC BK Hariprasad, inviting him to the council's first meeting on July 15 and seeking his insights into uplifting backward classes. P4

British team arrives to fix stranded F-35B fighter jet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ T'Puram/ New Delhi

THE F-35B fighter aircraft of the British Royal Navy, stranded in the Thiruvananthapuram international airport for the past three weeks, was on Sunday moved out from the tarmac. The aircraft was towed by a team of British engineers, who arrived from the UK on Sunday, using special equipment necessary for the movement and repair process.

The 14-member team arrived aboard a Royal Air Force Airbus A400M Atlas military transport aircraft, carrying specialist equipment. The jet, stranded since June 14 due to a hydraulic system failure, was moved to a designated hangar space provided by Air India.

British Royal Navy fighter jet F-35B being towed to hangar at Thiruvananthapuram airport. Inset: UK's Atlas ZM417 that brought aviation engineers and equipment | PTI

The development came after the UK accepted the offer of a space in the Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility at the airport. "The UK remains very grateful for the continued support and collaboration of the Indian authorities and airport teams," British High Commission stated.

This newspaper had earlier reported that F-35B Lightning II fighter would be repaired at its present location, for which a team would be flown in from the UK.

The F-35B fighter jet made an emergency landing at Thiruvananthapuram on the night of June 14, 2025 as it faced adverse weather conditions and low fuel.

EXPRESS READ

Sandeshkhali violence: CBI takes over probe

New Delhi: The CBI has taken over the probe into the killing of three BJP workers—Pradeep Mondal, Devdas Mondal, and Sukanta Mondal—during the 2019 post-poll violence in Sandeshkhali, West Bengal and registered an FIR against prime accused and former TMC leader Sahajahan Sheikh, officials said on Sunday | P8

SC admin seeks ex-CJI's removal from residence

New Delhi: The Supreme Court administration has written to the Centre for vacating the official residence of the Chief Justice of India at Krishna Menon Marg here, noting that the current occupant, ex-CJI DY Chandrachud, has stayed beyond the permissible period.

Now, get UAE's Golden Visa sans trade licence

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates government has started a new type of Golden Visa, which will be based on nomination unlike the current practice of investing large amounts in either property or business here. Indians can now get the Visa for life by paying AED 1,00,000 (INR 23.30 lakh).